Predictive Services Fuels Discussion

Issued By: Riverside Predictive Services Unit
Issued On: Thursday, September 10, 2009
Next Update: Thursday, September 24, 2009

General Discussion:

The recent cool-down has mitigated much of the recent fire activity over the region, but the dead fuels remain dry and live fuel moistures continue to decline. Most of the recent fires exhibited extreme fire behavior with very high flame lengths, rapid rates of spread, and total fuel consumption. This fire activity has been mostly fuels and terrain driven which illustrates the severity of dryness among the various fuel types. The next hot and dry spell over the next few days should be brief as another trough ushers in cooler and more humid conditions along with a fairly robust marine layer west of the coastal range by early next week.

Los Padres National Forest

Fuels continue their drying trend, and most sites are 60% or lower. An interesting development is that sycamore trees even in wet drainage's have leaves that are changing color. This began in mid August, at least a month earlier that usual.

Angeles National Forest

Live fuel moisture values:

Date	Location	Species	Old	New	Average
18-Aug	Clear Creek	Chamise	66%	92%	79%
18-Aug	Clear Creek	Manzanita			89%
14-Aug	Glendora Motorway	Chamise			62%
2-Sep	Lake Hughes	Chamise			50%

San Bernardino National Forest

No report.

Cleveland National Forest

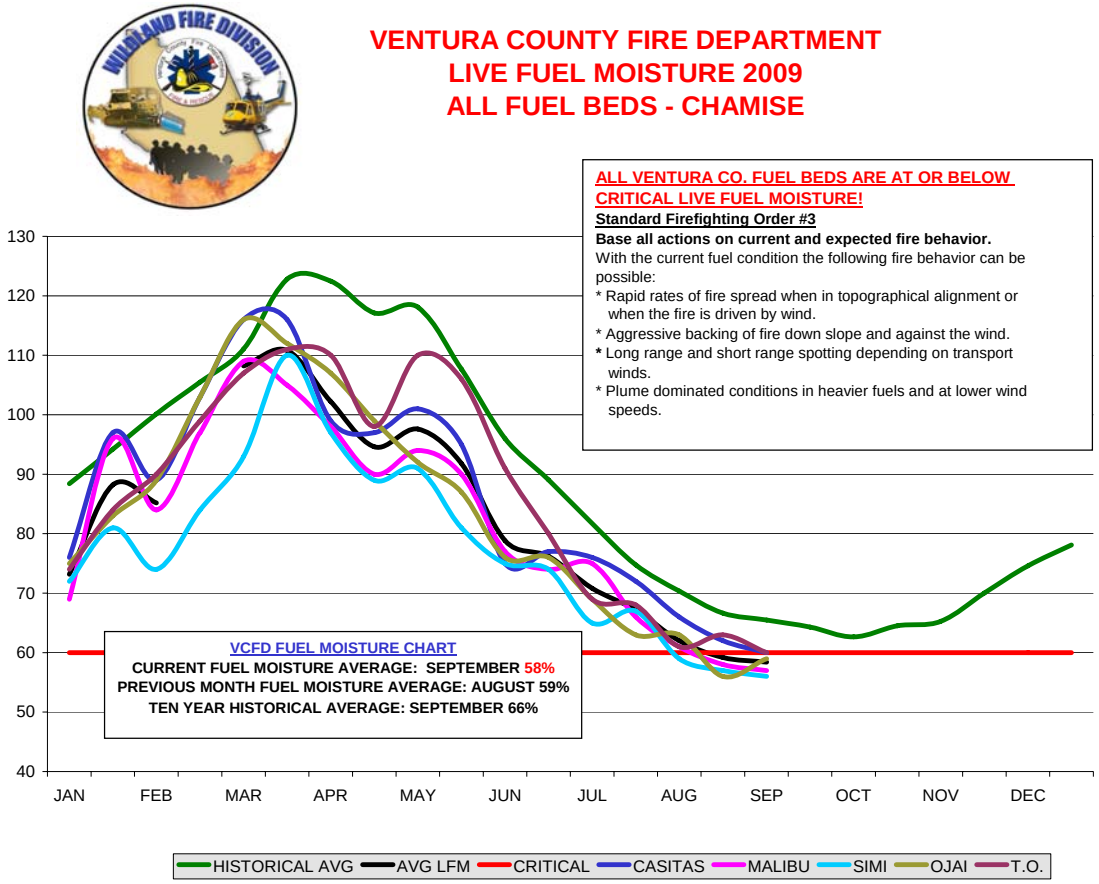
No report.

Riverside Ranger Unit

No report.

Ventura County

All fuel beds in Ventura County are at or below the critical 60%, taken the first week of September. Historically the live fuel moisture should continue to decline. Predicted weather for the end of the week is hot and dry with a light off shore event, which will promote additional drying. The small fires we have had in medium to heavy fuels have had near complete consumption with rapid rates of spread.



Los Angeles County

- Initial Attack activity has been moderate throughout the county over the last couple of weeks

- Very high ERCs and historically high BIs led to plume dominated fire effects on the Station fire due to a large mature (old growth) brush and shrub component. The fuels were completely consumed across much of the fire as the vegetation age class in some areas had no reported fire history with some areas having 80 to 100 tons per acre.

- A 260 acre fire on the Palos Verdes Peninsula in grass and brush had spotting up to ¼ of a mile. This was a wind and slope driven fire with the fuels about 25 tons per acre.

Orange County

- Fuel conditions in Orange County have not changed much from previous reports.

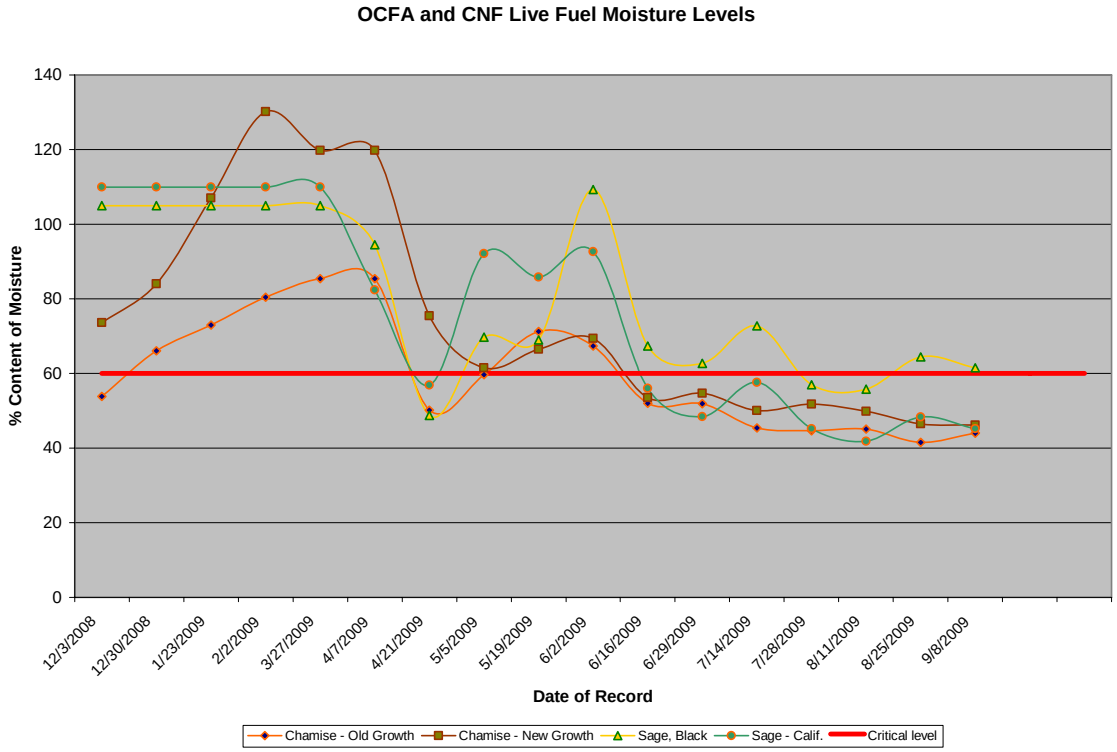
- Live Fuel Moistures in Chamise are remaining constant at or below 50% to 60% which is typical for this time of year. Branches of new growth are

becoming brittle and outward appearance indicates that the vegetation is in a dormant state.

- Live Fuel Moistures in sages are remaining constant at 60% levels which is typical for this time of year. Sages have, for the most part, turned brown.

- Small brush fires are indicating that fire spread will be more rapid that expected and consumption will be near 100%.

- This applies to all elevations within the county.



San Diego County

Kern County

The chart below shows the latest live fuel moisture readings:

KERN COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE PLAN & FUELS MANAGEMENT BATTALION

Monthly Live Fuel Moisture Summary September 2009

LOCATION	ELEVATION	SPECIES	FUEL MOISTURE			
			Current	Previous	Change	2008

Battalion 1 Tehachapi	4800'	Sage Old	27	48	-21	40
		Sage New	68	71	-3	71
		Ceanothus Old	55	52	3	60
		Ceanothus New	62	56	6	67
		Mt. Mahoganoy Old	50	58	-8	48
		Mt. Mahoganoy New	62	71	-9	59
Battalion 5 Frazier Park	4600'	Sage Old	37	38	-1	68
		Sage New	39	68	-29	73
		Ceanothus Old	35	49	-14	59
		Ceanothus New	35	53	-18	69
		Mt. Mahogany Old	34	52	-18	60
		Mt. Mahogany New	36	32	4	79
		Manzanita Old	40	56	-16	60
		Manzanita New	31	38	-7	71
Battalion 7 Kern Canyon	2500'	Ceanothus Old	48	52	-4	58
		Ceanothus New	53	60	-7	60
		Mt. Mahoganoy Old	54	57	-3	57
		Mt. Mahoganoy New	65	59	6	62
Battalion 7 Lake Isabella	3500'	Sage Old	34	36	-2	37
		Sage New	52	63	-11	66
		Ceanothus Old	49	53	-4	52
		Ceanothus New	53	61	-8	56
		Mt. Mahoganoy Old	53	53	0	54
		Mt. Mahoganoy New	54	61	-7	57

***Live fuel moisture values at or below 60% are considered critical.**